QVEENE ELIZABETHS SPEECH TO HER LAST PARLIAMENT.

The 30 of November 1601, her Maiestie being set vnder State in the Councell Chamber at Whitehall, the Speaker, accompanied with Privy Councellours, besides Knights and Burgesses of the lower House to the number of eight-scoore, presenting themselues at her Maiesties feet, for that so graciously and speedily shee had heard and yeelded to her Subiects desires, and proclaimed the same in their hearing as followeth.

M^r. *Speaker*,

WEE perceiue your comming is to present thankes vnto Vs; Know I accept them with no lesse ioy then your loues can haue desire to offer such a Present, and doe more esteeme it then any Treasure or Riches, for those Wee know how to prize, but Loyaltie, Loue, and Thankes, I account them invaluable; and though God hath raysed Mee high, yet this I account the glorie of my Crowne, that I have reigned with your Loues. This makes that I doe not so much reioyce that God hath made Mee to bee a

Queene, as to bee a Queene ouer ſo thankefull a People, and to bee the meane vnder God to conſerue you in ſafety, and preſerue you from danger, yea to bee the Inſtrument to deliuer you from diſhonour, from ſhame, and from infamie; to keepe you from out of ſeruitude, and from ſlaverie vnder our Enemies, and cruell tyranny, and vilde oppreſſion intended againſt Vs: for the better withſtanding wherof, Wee take very acceptably your intended helpes, and chiefely in that it manifeſteth your loues and largeneſſe of heart to your Soveraigne. Of My ſelfe I muſt ſay this, I neuer was any greedy ſcraping graſper, nor a ſtrict faſt-holding Prince, nor yet a waſter, My heart was neuer ſet vpon any worldly goods, but onely for my Subiects good. What you doe beſtow on Me, I will not hoard vp, but receiue it to beſtow on you againe; yea Mine owne Properties I account yours to bee expended for your good, and your eyes ſhall ſee the beſtowing of it for your wellfare.

Mr. *Speaker*, I would wiſh you and the reſt to ſtand vp, for I feare I ſhall yet trouble you with longer ſpeech.

Mr. *Speaker*, you give me thankes, but I am more to thanke you, and I charge you, thanke them of the Lower-Houſe from Me, for had I not received knowledge from you, I might a fallen into the lapſe of an Error, onely for want of true information.

Since I was Queene yet did I neuer put My

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Pen to any Grant but vpon pretext and ſemblance made Me, that it was for the good and availe of my Subiects generally, though a private profit to ſome of my ancient Servants who have deſerved well: But that my Grants ſhall bee made Grievances to my People, and Oppreſſions, to bee priviledged vnder colour of Our Pattents, Our Princely Dignitie ſhall not ſuffer it.

When I heard it, I could give no reſt vnto my thoughts vntill I had reformed it, & thoſe Varlets, lewd perſons, abuſers of my bountie, ſhall know I will not ſuffer it. And Mr. *Speaker*, tell the Houſe from mee, I take it exceeding gratefull, that the knowledge of theſe things are come vnto mee from them. And though amongſt them the principall Members are ſuch as are not touched in private, and therefore need not ſpeake from any feeling of the griefe, yet We haue heard that other Gentlemen alſo of the Houſe, who ſtand as free, haue ſpoken as freely in it; which giues Vs to know that no reſpects or intreſts haue moved them other then the mindes they beare to ſuffer no diminution of our Honour, and our Subiects loue vnto Vs. The zeale of which affection tending to eaſe my People, & knit their hearts vnto vs, I embrace with a Princely care farre aboue all earthly Treaſures. I eſteeme my Peoples loue, more then which I deſire not to merit: And God that gaue me here to ſit, and placed mee ouer you, knowes that I neuer re-

ſpected my ſelfe, but as your good was conſerued in mee; yet what dangers, what practiſes, and what perills I have paſſed, ſome, if not all of you know: but none of theſe things doe mooue mee, or euer made mee feare, but it is God that hath delivered me.

And in my gouerning this Land, I haue euer ſet the laſt Iudgement day before mine eyes, and ſo to rule, as I ſhall be Iudged and anſwer before a higher Iudge, to whoſe Iudgement Seat I doe appeale in that neuer thought was cheriſhed in my heart that tended not to my Peoples good.

And if my Princely bountie haue beene abuſed, and my Grants turned to the hurt of my People contrary to my will and meaning, or if any in Authoritie vnder mee haue neglected, or converted what I haue committed vnto them, I hope God will not lay their culps to my charge.

To be a King, and weare a Crown, is a thing more glorious to them that ſee it, then it is pleaſant to them that beare it: for my ſelfe, I neuer was ſo much inticed with the glorious name of a King, or the royall authoritie of a Queene, as delighted that God hath made me His Inſtrument to maintaine His Truth and Glorie, and to defend this Kingdome from diſhonour, dammage, tyrannie, and oppreſſion. But ſhould I aſcribe any of theſe things vnto my ſelfe, or my ſexly weakeneſſe, I were not worthy to liue, and of all moſt vnworthy

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of the mercies I haue receiued at Gods hands but to God onely and wholly all is giuen and aſcribed.

The cares and trouble of a Crowne I cannot more fitly reſemble then to the Drugges of a learned Phyſitian, perfumed with ſome Aromaticall ſauour, or to bitter Pils guilded ouer, by which they are made more exceptable or leſſe offenſiue, which indeed are bitter and vnpleaſant to take; and for my owne part, were it not for Conſcience ſake to diſcharge the dutie that God hath layd vpon me, and to maintaine his glorie, and keepe you in ſafetie, in mine owne diſpoſition I ſhould be willing to reſigne the place I hold to any other, and glad to be freed of the Glory with the Labors, for it is not my deſire to liue nor to reign longer then my life and reigne ſhall bee for your good. And though you haue had and may haue many mightier and wiſer Princes ſitting in this Seat, yet you neuer had nor ſhall haue any that will loue you better.

Thus Mr. *Speaker*, I commend mee to your loyall Loues, and yours to my beſt care and your further Councels, & I pray you Mr. *Controuller*, & Mr. *Secretary*, and you of my Councell, that before theſe Gentlemen depart into their Countreys you bring them all to kiſſe my Hand.

FINIS.